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ABSTRACT

This issue paper summarizes key program elements in the Goals 2000: Educate America Act (P.L. 103-227), signed into law on March 31, 1994. The legislation, designed to codify the eight National Education Goals, authorizes funds for K-12 school improvement and establishes a framework to encourage state and local educational agencies to develop comprehensive plans to integrate and implement federal education programs. The goals focus on: (1)improving student learning by establishing objectives for students and schools; (2) encouraging states and local school districts to adopt rigorous standards for their education systems; (3) improving the quality of teaching in K-12 schools; (4) identifying common standards or benchmarks for student achievement; (5) and reaffirming the National Education Goals as federal policy. The main purpose of this report is to advise deans and directors of departments, schools, and colleges of education of the challenges and opportunities in the new law. The report includes: a description of the goals, including proposed authorization for each of its parts, a close-up examination of Goal 4--Teacher Education and Professional Development, and a timeline for implementation. (LL)

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ED 367 661

GOALS 2000:
EDUCATE AMERICA ACT

Implications for Teacher Educators

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AN ISSUE PAPER BY:

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INTRODUCTION

On March 31, President Clinton signed the Goals 2000: Educate America Act (P.L. 103-227) into law. The legislation is designed to codify the eight National Education Goals, authorize funds for K-12 school improvement, and establish a framework to encourage state and local educational agencies to develop comprehensive plans that will provide a coherent framework to integrate and implement federal education programs. On its trip through the legislative process, the Goals 2000 bill became a magnet for a number of other education programs, such as reauthorization of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement and the Safe Schools Act. Although these measures technically were enacted as part of Goals 2000, they are separate programs and, therefore, are not discussed in this issue paper. Rather, this report summarizes the key program elements in Goals 2000 and advises deans and directors of departments, schools, and colleges of education of the challenges and opportunities in this new law. Figure 1, page 6 describes Goals 2000 and includes the proposed authorization for each of its parts.

A key purpose of Goals 2000 is to identify common standards or benchmarks for student achievement and school system effort. Considerable controversy surrounded the legislation's provisions to create a federal mechanism to identify "performance" and "opportunity-to-learn" standards. The law defines performance standards as concrete examples of what students must know and be able to do to demonstrate mastery of the skills and knowledge framed by content standards. Opportunity-to-learn standards are "the criteria for, and the basis of, assessing the sufficiency of quality of the resources, practices and conditions necessary at each level of the education system...to learn the material in content standards" (Sec. 2 (7)).

State and local officials argued that national standards such as these signaled federal intrusion into management of local school systems, a function reserved to the states by the Tenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Consequently, although references to standards remain in the legislation, they are entirely voluntary. No state is required to meet nationally developed standards, nor seek federal government endorsement of state or local standards to receive Goals 2000 funding.

The National Education Goals

① By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn.

② By the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.

③ By the year 2000, all students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography, and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our Nation's modern economy.

④ By the year 2000, the Nation's teaching force will have access to programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century.

⑤ By the year 2000, U.S. students will be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.

⑥ By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

⑦ By the year 2000, every school in the United States will be free of drugs, violence, and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

⑧ By the year 2000, every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.

CLOSEUP ON GOAL 4— Teacher Education and Professional Development

Goal 4, Teacher Education and Professional Development, was introduced by Indiana Congressman Tim Roemer. The inclusion of this goal makes it clear that the implementation of federally supported school improvement must include attention to the preparation and continuing professional development of educators. The objectives of this goal are,

(i) all teachers will have access to preservice teacher education and continuing professional development activities that will provide such teachers with the knowledge and skills needed to teach to an increasingly diverse student population with a variety of educational, social, and health needs;

(ii) all teachers will have continuing opportunities to acquire additional knowledge and skills needed to teach challenging subject matter and to use emerging new methods, forms of assessment, and technologies;

(iii) states and school districts will create integrated strategies to attract, recruit, prepare, retain, and support the continued professional development of teachers, administrators, and other educators, so that there is a highly talented work force of professional educators to teach challenging subject matter; and

(iv) partnerships will be established, whenever possible, among local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, parents, and local labor, business, and professional associations to provide and support programs for the professional development of educators. (Sec. 101 (4)B))

PROVISIONS

Enactment of Education Goals

The legislation reaffirms the National Education Goals as federal policy. Operationally, this means that future education legislation should be linked to achieving one or more of these eight goals. The Goals, including a new teacher professional development goal, are listed on pages 3-4.

Goals Panel

The legislation establishes a 19-member National Education Goals Panel. This body essentially is the existing Goals Panel, but the legislation makes it an entity of the federal government and recommends $3 million annually to fund it. The Goals Panel is required to report to the president, the secretary of education, and Congress on the nation's progress toward meeting the eight National Education Goals. The Goals Panel may suggest nominations to the president for individuals to serve on the National Education Standards and Improvement Council and will review criteria proposed by that council to certify standards voluntarily submitted by states. In addition, the Goals Panel is charged with supporting the work of resource groups developing guidelines for assessing the readiness of children for school. Figure 1, page 6 gives a graphic representation of the relationship between the Goals Panel, National Education Standards and Improvement Council, and state and local programs supported by Goals 2000.

National Standards and Improvement Council

Goals 2000 creates a new body, the National Education Standards and Improvement Council (NESIC). This 19-member group will certify and periodically review voluntary national content and opportunity-to-learn standards. They also will certify standards voluntarily submitted to them by states. The 19 NESIC members are appointed by the president from nominations by the Goals Panel, the speaker of the House, the Senate majority leader, and the secretary of education. Members must include professional educators, representatives of business and industry and postsecondary education institutions, public representatives, and experts in measurement, assessment, curriculum, school finance, and school reform. Priority is to be given to individuals who have experience with the educational needs of at-risk, limited English-proficient, or disabled children.

In considering voluntary national content, student performance, and opportunity-to-learn standards, the NESIC must include the capability of teachers to provide high-quality instruction in each national goal content area to all students. To assist the NESIC with identifying

criteria for opportunity-to-learn standards, the secretary may award grants to consortia of state and local policymakers, educators, parents, business, and others to propose and develop draft standards. In designing these standards, each consortium must draw upon current research about student achievement and the necessary conditions for effective teaching and learning. The legislation does not specify the amount of these awards but does require the secretary to make a minimum of two awards.

Technology

Goals 2000 directs the secretary of education to work with cabinet and sub-cabinet agencies to develop a long-range plan to encourage the use of technology to improve teaching and learning. In addition, an Office of Educational Technology is created in the U.S. Department of Education. This office will support research, demonstrations, and evaluation related to the use of technology in educational settings.

State and Local Education Systemic Improvement

The heart of Goals 2000 is Title III. In this Title, the legislation establishes a mechanism for the federal government to support state and local school improvement efforts. Although institutions of higher education are not direct recipients of federal funds, they are intended to be key players in the school reform effort. The law states that, "institutions of higher education should be encouraged to enter into partnerships with schools to provide information and guidance on the skills and knowledge graduates need in order to enter and successfully complete post-secondary education...schools should provide information and guidance to institutions on the skills, knowledge, and preservice training teachers need, and the types of professional development educators need..."(Sec. 301(12)).

Congress recommends that Title III receive $400 million per year. Of this money, the secretary may reserve five percent for national projects. These national projects include support for finance equalization efforts, technical assistance for states, research and evaluation of Goals 2000 programs, dissemination of model programs, special assistance to urban and to rural school districts, and a study of successful coordinated services programs. The remaining $380 million is available for states on a formula basis.

A state must apply for its share of available Goals 2000 money. As part of the application process, the governor and chief state school officer must agree to develop and implement a state improvement plan for elementary and secondary education. The actual design of the plan is to be done by a state panel. The panel must include the governor and chief state school officer; the chair of the state board of education and the chairs of appropriate state legislative committees; teachers; principals; administrators; **deans or senior administrators of a college, school, or department of education**; teacher representatives; parents; secondary school students; higher education representatives; business and labor leaders; community-based organizations; organizations serving young children; local boards of education; and others. Priority will be given in these appointments to ensuring that individuals with expertise or background in the education needs or assessments of at-risk, limited English-proficient, or disabled children will serve on the state panel. The governor and chief state school officer each appoint half of the panel members.

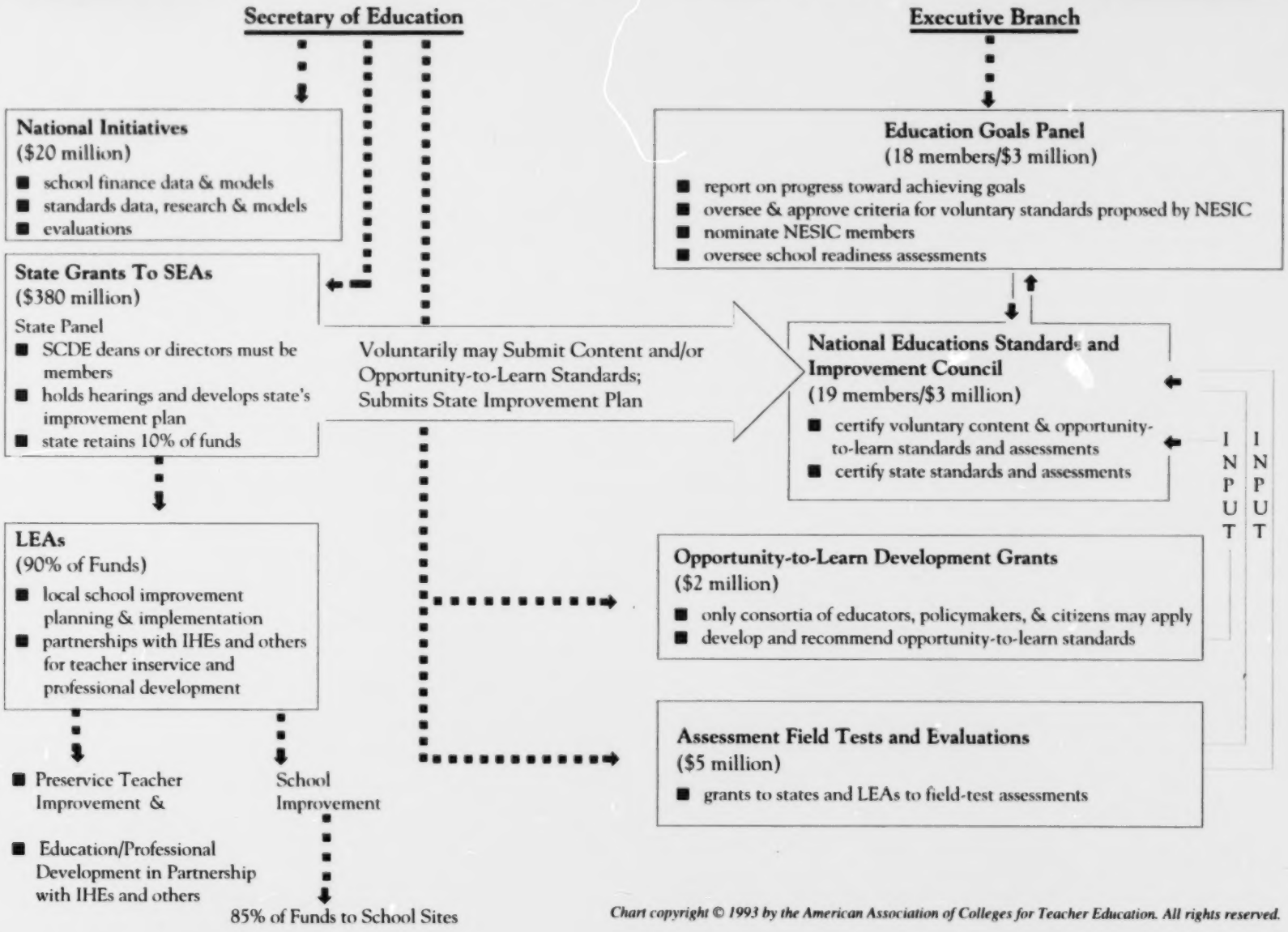
The panel must conduct hearings and gather substantial public comment as the plan is developed. The plan must include "strategies for meeting the National Education Goals by improving teaching and learning and students' mastery of basic and advanced skills in core content areas..." This includes a process for improving the state's system of teacher and school administrator preparation, the recruitment of persons into education careers, and the nature and delivery of educator professional development. Furthermore, this panel will determine the percentage of Goals 2000 funds to be used for local school improvement or for educator professional development.

The state must submit its plan to the secretary of education and may voluntarily submit performance, opportunity-to-learn standards, or both, to the National Education Standards and Improvement Council for review. Not all states may choose to develop a state improvement plan. The governor and chief state school officer may request a waiver if they can demonstrate that a panel with essentially the same composition has developed a school improvement plan that was formulated with broad public and professional input.

Once the plan is approved, a state will receive its Goals 2000 allocation. In the first year of the legislation, states may reserve 40 percent of its funds for initiating its state improvement plan. However, in every year thereafter, the state share will be 10 percent. The state may use its money to work on development of standards; assist local schools and districts; support programs for minority, limited-English proficient, disabled, and female students; support innovative programs to upgrade teacher skills; and for other purposes.

The remaining funds (90 percent of the state share) go to local education agencies and schools. The LEA may apply for and use its funds for local reform, educator professional development or both. Although the legislation requires that both school improvement and educator professional development be supported, the decision on the percent of funds spent on each is left to the state. As part of the state's school improvement plan, the state's school improvement panel will determine the percentage of its Goals 2000 money that will be used for each purpose.

Figure 1—GOALS 2000: EDUCATE AMERICA ACT (P.L. 103 - 227)


Secretary of Education
Executive Branch
National Initiatives
($20 million)
school finance data & models
standards data, research & models
evaluations
Education Goals Panel
(18 members/$3 million)
report on progress toward achieving goals
oversee & approve criteria for voluntary standards proposed by NESIC
nominate NESIC members
oversee school readiness assessments
State Grants To SEAs
($380 million)
State Panel
SCDE deans or directors must be members
holds hearings and develops state's improvement plan
state retains 10% of funds
Voluntarily may Submit Content and/or Opportunity-to-Learn Standards; Submits State Improvement Plan
National Educations Standards and Improvement Council
(19 members/$3 million)
certify voluntary content & opportunity-to-learn standards and assessments
certify state standards and assessments
INPUT
INPUT
LEAs
(90% of Funds)
local school improvement planning & implementation
partnerships with IHEs and others for teacher inservice and professional development
Opportunity-to-Learn Development Grants
($2 million)
only consortia of educators, policymakers, & citizens may apply
develop and recommend opportunity-to-learn standards
Assessment Field Tests and Evaluations
($5 million)
grants to states and LEAs to field-test assessments
Preservice Teacher Improvement &
Education/Professional Development in Partnership with IHEs and others
School Improvement
85% of Funds to School Sites

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If an LEA applies to the state for funds to support local reform efforts, it must submit a local improvement plan and agree that 85 percent of the funds it receives will flow through the LEA to specific schools. At least half of these schools must be in need of special assistance. Indicators of this need may be low student achievement, large numbers of low-income families, or similar criteria developed by the LEA. The local improvement plan must reflect the priorities of the state plan and include strategies that enhance teaching and learning, improve governance and management, strengthen parental and community involvement, and ensure a fair opportunity to learn for all students. The local improvement plan must be developed by a local improvement panel.

In addition, local education agencies or a consortium of LEAs in cooperation with institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, or a combination of these groups may apply for awards to (1) improve preservice teacher education; or (2) support continuing, sustained professional development for educators. These are competitive grants to be awarded through a peer-review process. Priority for awarding these grants is to be given to LEAs that form partnerships with collegiate educators. These partnerships may establish professional development sites and focus on upgrading teachers' knowledge of content areas or may target the preparation and continued professional development of individuals who teach limited English-proficient or disabled students. Funds received by these consortia must be used to improve preservice teacher education as it relates to educators' subject matter and pedagogical expertise, or for the development and implementation of new and improved forms of continuing and sustained professional development opportunities for educators. Like the grants for local reform efforts, at least half of the professional development awards must go to schools in need of special assistance.

Challenges and Opportunities

The focus of Goals 2000 is on improving student learning by establishing goals for students and schools, encouraging states and school districts to adopt rigorous standards for their education system, and improving the quality of teaching in K-12 schools. Institutions of higher education; schools, and colleges, and departments of education; and teacher educators are viewed as important partners in this process. Deans or other teacher education administrators must be part of the state panel to design the school improvement plan. Moreover, if an LEA intends to apply for funds to support educator preservice or professional development, priority will be given to proposals in which LEAs form partnerships with colleges and universities.

Although Goals 2000 presents new opportunities for schools, colleges, and departments of education, only those institutions that are committed to working in partnership with K-12 schools—especially schools with particular needs—will be rewarded.

What You Should Do

For the current fiscal year, Congress already has appropriated $104 million for Goals 2000. This is seen as planning or start-up money. You should let members of your congressional delegation know that this is an important new program which deserves increased appropriations in 1995 and in the future.

The state improvement panel will play a powerful role in determining how Goals 2000 funds will be used in your state. It is important to immediately contact your governor and chief state school officer regarding appointment to this panel. Although a dean or director of education must be included on the panel, the legislation does not require that more than one should be appointed. Therefore, you may want to work with colleagues on a strategy to ensure that a trusted and respected colleague receives this appointment.

It is essential that you initiate, strengthen, or expand your partnerships with K-12 schools. The types of partnerships that will be funded through Goals 2000 are very likely to be eligible for support in forthcoming federal legislation—such as reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Timeline for Implementation

The secretary of education will send guidelines to state agencies and governors in May regarding the application process for Goals 2000 funds. This means states will begin to receive their allocation before school resumes in September. It is very possible that the state improvement panel required by this legislation will be appointed in late spring and that a mechanism will be in place to make awards for school improvement and educator professional development in early fall.

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